DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 141 014 RC 009 950

AUTHOR	One Feather, Vivian
TITLE	Lakota Oral Literature.
INSTITUTION	Black Hills State Coll., Spearfish, S. Dak.
PUB DATE	Dec 74
NOTE	48p.; For related document, see ED 073 860
AVAILABLE FROM	Supply Store, Black Hills State College, Spearfish, South Dakota 57783 ($0.45)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Activities; Bibliographies; Cultural Awareness; *Curriculum Guides; Educational Objectives; English; Filmographies; *Higher Education; *Legends; *Literature; *Speech Communication
IDENTIFIERS	*Native Studies; *Sioux (Lakota)

ABSTRACT

Course objectives for the three credit hour Lakota Oral Literature (college level English) course presented in this publication are to: perceive through the reading and hearing of Lakota legends a better understanding of the known world of the Lakota people which existed prior to white contact; understand the origin of the laws which the Lakota people obeyed throughout centuries to the present; appreciate the world of the supernatural and its relationship with the Lakota people; understand that an oral tradition has as much validity and importance as a written tradition; and understand the source of reasoning in the Lakota sense as conveyed through the oral tradition. Each of the six individual units presented in this publication includes sections devoted to: (1) organization of the unit for the instructor; (2) unit objectives; (3) reading materials; (4) "important facts" (precepts); and (5) discussion topics or activities. The six units are titled as follows: "The Creation of the Universe and the Creation of Living Creatures"; "The Circle of Evil Spirits"; "The Order of Things"; "The Lakota People Come to the Earth"; "Ohunkakan"; and "Ehanni Wicowoyake". Also included are a supplementary bibliography (23 entries) and a filmography (10 entries). (JC)

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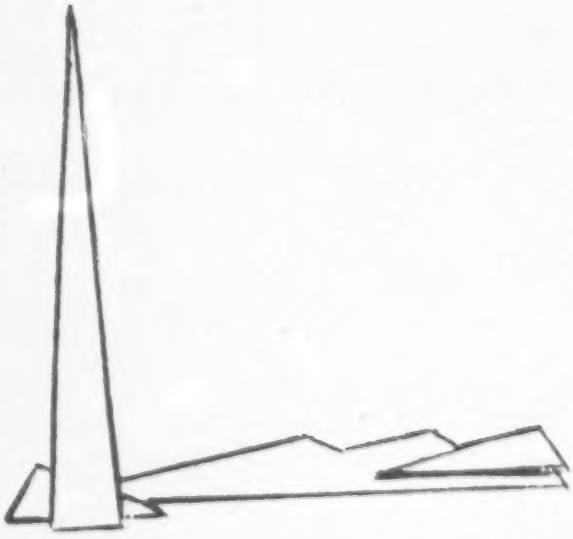

Lakota Oral Literature

RC009950

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LAKOTA ORAL LITERATURE

Engl 115 3 Credit Hours

Course Description:

Oral stories handed down through the generations which are the explanation of the creation of the universe for the Lakota people. These stories give rules or laws for the Lakota society to observe from that day onward.

The Lakota Oral Literature course outline, presented in this publication, was made possible by an appropriation from the State of South Dakota to Black Hills State College, Center of Indian Studies, Spearfish, South Dakota.

The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the State of South Dakota and no official endorsement by the State of South Dakota should be inferred.

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Introduction

It is a privilege to offer you this syllabus as a recommended guideline for the Lakota Studies course that is presented in the following pages.

This syllabus is an attempt to meet the educational needs voiced by many Lakota and non-Lakota individuals who are concerned that Lakota Studies attain an academic and sophisticated quality comparable to other college departmental courses. It is also intended to be usable as an in-depth supplement to those Lakota instructors who already possess native abilities and knowledge, but who wish to utilize a supportive service.

While resources for this syllabus have been restricted to those relating to the Lakota people, a few Dakota sources are included herein. The titles of some materials may create confusion, as the term Dakota to describe the Lakota of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. It is pointed out here that researchers over-generalized in these instances.

Synthesizing the existing materials has resulted in a selection process dependent upon the short span of time in which the writing has taken place. It is without doubt that various materials of excellent quality have been overlooked here and there. Therefore, it should be emphasized that this syllabus is a beginning, an attempt to present a workable piece of information with relative sources.

Many areas of resources have been drawn upon in compiling the syllabus. These include the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the Bureau of Ethnology, the Smithsonian Institute, the State Historical Society, unpublished manuscripts, private and fraternal organizations,

out-of-print publications, and currently published books and resources.

It is a sincere hope that this syllabus will be helpful to those involved in Lakota Studies. It is also hoped that this effort will enlighten other Indian Studies programs as well. More than this, to be helpful to all who share a deep concern for the education of the Indian intellect.

Vivian One Feather
Curriculum Developer

Center of Indian Studies
Black Hills State College
Spearfish, South Dakota 57783

December, 1974

Course Objectives

1. To perceive through the reading and hearing of Lakota legends a better understanding of the known world of the Lakota people which existed for generations prior to white contact.

2. To understand the origin of the laws which the Lakota people obeyed throughout centuries to the present.

3. To appreciate the world of the supernatural and its relationship with the Lakota people.

4. To understand that an oral tradition has as much validity and importance as a written tradition.

5. To understand the source of reasoning in the Lakota sense as conveyed through the oral tradition.

Organization of the Course

The Lakota people have an oral tradition which is rich and emphatic in its establishment of the many rules that are the basis of their society. These rules have been passed down through many generations in storytelling form from the earliest days of the creation of the world. Through the passage of time and with occurrences, the Lakota world has emerged from its simple creation into a complex society that is proud and knowledgeable of its rightful place on earth.

The responsibility of transmitting stories is assumed by a storyteller. This person is generally an older person who has accumulated a vast repertoire of stories of various subjects. With respectfulness, the storyteller would have qualities like an instructor to give pertinent directions or like that of a judge to make moral judgements on various situations. Without written documents, the storyteller transmitted his knowledge through the spoken word and gave lasting imagery to his literature.

At times, the listener was taken back to the beginning of the world and in serious tones and descriptions, the storyteller spoke of things long ago and the vast powers of the supernaturals. Just as eloquently, but with a much lighter mood, the storyteller might transmit a tale about the trickster, Iktomi, with such rich descriptive images as to make laughter run rampant. Then, too, the storyteller might talk of present day happenings affecting the Lakota people, such as wars or hunger. Altogether, the winter evenings were spent in close companionship learning as the storyteller taught the concepts of the Lakota society.

Lakota Oral Literature is based upon the stories compiled in the

text, Ehanni Ohunkakan. Much of this text has been organized from the Dr. J. R. Walker collection stored in the Archives at the Colorado State Historical Society's offices in Denver, Colorado. This collection has the most complete and authentic source of Lakota stories which were translated to Dr. Walker by George Sword, an early reservation policeman.

There are other stories available for the Dakota people in various places. For those wishing to compare the Lakota with the Dakota creation to understand the similarities or differences, there exists the "Dakota Texts," written by Ella Deloria, which gives accounts of the earliest times on earth. Another writer, also a Dakota person, is Charles Eastman, who wrote Wigwam Evenings.

Listed at the back of this syllabus are many other sources in books, published papers, journals, and museums which concern the Lakota, Dakota, or, in general, the Sioux. However, it should be pointed out that the majority of material gathered in many of the available works are those dealing with the Dakota people, not the Lakota people.

An instructor of Lakota Oral Literature should know the differences between the types of stories which are available as literature. There are the Ehanni stories, the Ohunkakan stories, and the Ehanni Wicowoyake stories. Each of these three areas cover a specific time and space in the literature of the Lakota people. In order to begin the sequence of stories, those that concern the beginning of the world are represented first. These Ehanni stories establish the physical world. These are followed by the Ohunkakan stories which concern themselves with the life and growth of the Lakota people and the presence of supernatural forms. Oftentimes, the forms are both supernatural and human, or sometimes, animal and human. It is during this period of time that the Lakota people

emerge as their own people with an identity. Finally, the Ehanni Wicowoyake stories tell of real-life happenings among the Lakota people.

Although the stories included in Lakota Oral Literature deal generally with life in the past, there is still value in the patterns described within the stories. It does not matter that the style has changed throughout the generations by storytellers. What matters is the story that is told. Through human speech, the stories become a part of the language and through tying one story with another, the entire picture gained gives greater meaning to all the elements contained within.

There are many archetypes in the stories presented in this course. One of the most recurring archetypes is that of good versus evil. Stories dealing with this subject can be found in the earliest forms and in the latest stories. For the Lakota people, the life on this earth involved a struggle which produced a pattern of living. The struggle was between archetypes such as life and death, mother earth and sky father, animal versus human, individual against society, love and duty, triumph and defeat, power and cleverness, and many others.

These archetypes made it very plain to the listener what his or her conduct should become. The storyteller left little doubt as to what were right conduct ethics. In this manner, the Lakota learned proper ways of living and knew the reasons why things were done in a certain manner.

It is very tempting to bring together a large body of material to form the basis of this course. An analytical approach could cover the entire range of stories of the American Indian from one coast to the other. However, since this course deals with the Lakota people only, the Ehanni Ohunkakan text attempts to fulfill expectations of the course.

For those interested in analyzing a wider range of stories taken from various Indian tribes, Stith Thompson's Tales of the North American

Indians was first written in 1929 and later reprinted in 1966. This collection of tales covers many tribes and is divided into sections dealing with various stages of development. There are sections on the trickster, the creation, the animal-human marriages, the hero stories, and journeys to the other world. It is undoubtedly the finest attempt to analyze Indian tales.

Two other supportive books of a wide range of tales which are relevant are Paul Hamlyn's North American Mythology, and Literature of the American Indian by Thomas Sanders and Walter Peek. Hamlyn's book, while elementary-oriented, gives the reader an overall view of the various culture areas and the stories representative of those areas. The Literature of the American Indian is representative and is used here in the course as supplemental reading, especially chapters 1 and 2, which deal in depth with creations and trickster tales of various tribes.

Equally strong on its own as a text for this course, but recommended as supplemental reading, is Vine Deloria, Jr.'s book, God is Red. This scholarly work explains the position of the Indian viewing his own creation. His arguments regarding the establishment of time and space and the natural phenomena are presented through comparison of the Christian explanation with that of the Indian.

The Sacred Pipe by Joseph Epes Brown is a detailed record of the ceremonies which have been performed for generations. Its usefullness is invaluable in studying such ceremonies. Black Elk Speaks by John Neihardt is another fine supplement which gives supportive material to the concept of the four directions and explanations of how to do a thing in its proper manner.

UNIT ONE
THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE
THE CREATION OF LIVING CREATURES

Objectives

1. The purpose of this unit is to aid the student in understanding the Lakota world through its own creation.

2. The students will master the use of Lakota words describing characters within the creation stories, and be able to relate these words into English traslations.

Materials

Ehanni Ohunkakan. Spearfish, Black Hills State College, 1971.

Sections on Ehanni Summary, Creation of the Universe, and Creation of Living Things.

Hassrick, Royal. The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964.

Chapter 11, The Universe and the Controllers.

Deloria, Vine, Jr. God is Red. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1973.

Chapter 6, The Problem of Creation, and Chapter 9, The Origin of Religion.

Sanders, Thomas, and Peek, Walter. Literature of the American Indian. Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press.

Chapter 1, Pre-Columbian Religions: From Wahkontah, the Great Mystery.

To the Instructor:

The first response of an Indian or Lakota student to the creation of the world is generally a typical Christian version. While they may have knowledge of Greek or other European versions, it is doubtful that they know of the creation of other tribal groups in North America. The situation, then, is to explain the creation story from the point of view of the Indian.

Vine Deloria, Jr. attempts to show the differences between the Christian modern viewpoint of creation and that of the American Indian. Using the Old Testament of the Bible, he attempts to show by analyzing creation phenomena that the Old Testament was much closer to the tribal versions of creation. In his writings, he brings out the importance of man and nature. "The Problem of Creation" is excellent background for understanding the creation-origin stories. The creation established the order of things and gave each particular group its own identity and its own geographic land, a permanent home on the face of this earth. Study starts with an understanding of the physical creation of one's world, the populating of it with animals, and lastly, the human being.

The creation stories of several tribes can be analyzed through reading the various tribal versions as given in chapter 1 of the Literature of the American Indian. Here are fifteen various stories which tell of how a particular tribe was created and placed upon this earth.

Important Facts

1. Life is created through cooperation with the supernatural world.

2. Life was created after the plants because of the great "silence" amongst the plants.

3. Eggs or earth form the beginnings of life.

4. Tate (Wind) gives life or the breath of life, while Wi (Sun) gives warmth.

5. Ksa (Wisdom) taught a language to each animal or thing.

6. Each animal had its own identity and its own language, and all animals could speak a common language.

7. Each animal was given a spirit (Nagila) by Mahpiyato.

8. The order of creation was plants, insects, reptiles, birds, and finally, animals.

9. The order of creation was two of a kind at a time so the sacred number of four is established.

Discussion Topics

1. Analyze creation as proposed by Genesis and that given from the Lakota point of view.

2. Describe the impact of nature upon the philosophy of Lakota people.

3. What rating does the human being have in the creation stories among various tribes?

4. What security does a creation story provide to society?

UNIT TWO
THE CIRCLE OF EVIL SPIRITS

Objective

To understand that the Lakota world's first struggle was between the forces of good and evil.

Materials

Ehanni Ohunkakan. Spearfish: Black Hills State College, 1971.

The Circle of Evil Spirits, and Tate and Ksapela Among the Pte People.

Eastman, Charles, and Eastman, Elaine G. Wigwam Evenings. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1930.

Thirteenth Evening, and The Wars of Wakeeyan and Unktayhee.

To the Instructor:

Establishing the pattern for disorder in the midst of a newly created tranquil world is a female. Unk, whose Lakota name has been lost, is the female who causes disruption where there was nothing but goodness and happiness. Her separation from Maka (Earth) and the rest of the supernatural world sets up the beginning of the Circle of evil. Unk falls in love with a monster, Unhcegila, which is probably a mastodon or other large animal whose petrified remains are found in the Dakota territory. This monster-husband and Unk in their marriage create many monsters like their father who live in the water.

This archetype of good and evil is repeated throughout Lakota literature in many stories where a struggle of power takes place. One of Unk's sons is Iya, the hungry giant, who roams the countryside looking for Lakota people to eat. Thus, evil is represented by the monsters and their habits.

Also included in the Circle of Evil is an interesting concept of germs which are embodied in the Mini-Watutkala. They cause high fevers and generally enter the Lakota person's body through the water he drinks.

It is also interesting to note that Iktomi is not given a place in the Circle of Evil Spirits. As he himself explains later, he was created as a wise man to do good deeds but his funny shape made others laugh at him. Therefore, he sought to revenge himself by making others look ridiculous.

The story Tate and Ksapela among the Pte People is basically a love story between the most beautiful of the Pte people (the earliest ancestors of the Lakota people) and one of the most handsome supernatural

beings (Tate). The Pte people lived in the regions under the earth and served the supernatural beings.

There is a strong courtship which is marred by Unk's sons who attempt to abduct the beautiful Ite. Tate has given up his supernatural powers in order to marry Ite, and is forced to fight like an ordinary man. So the forces of good and evil struggle here again until, in this case, there is help from the supernatural world.

Important Facts

1. An ordinary man can be aided by the supernatural.

2. The Pte people (ancestors of the Lakota) lived a peaceful, contented life in the early days.

3. A winding cave was the connection between this world and the regions underneath the earth.

4. A contract of marriage let the woman place the man in her own lodge.

5. A holy man is appointed by his own people to represent the

6. A "sound" comes to those who seek to communicate with the supernatural.

7. Evil can be punished.

8. Ksa is wisdom but Ksapela is folly, which is an archetype.

9. The term Kola is reserved for strangers.

10. A man is judged by his actions.

11. The supernatural can take various physical forms that we see in nature.

UNIT THREE
THE ORDER OF THINGS

Objectives

1. The student will understand the order of the Universe for the Lakota people by reading stories which give the reasoning of the existence of natural phenomena as well as time and space concepts.

2. Laws or rules are first found in the arrival of Woope, the daughter of Mahpiyato, who is supreme judge.

3. The struggle between good and evil and other archetypes is ever-present.

Materials

Ehanni Ohunkakan. Spearfish: Black Hills State College, 1971.

Establishment of the Four Directions, and The Third and Fourth Times.

Alexander, Hartley G. The World's Rim. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1953.

Chapter 1, The Pipe of Peace.

Neihardt, John G. Black Elk Speaks. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961.

Chapter 1, The Offering of the Pipe
Chapter 3, The Great Vision

To the Instructor:

This unit deals with the selfish acts of various persons who are banished by Mahpiyato from living a happy life and sentenced to wander about the edge of the world. Only by performing certain tasks can these persons be reunited and return to live amongst their people. Their selfish acts are pertinent even to today's living. There is the beautiful woman who thinks only of her beauty and forgets her small children who cry and are neglected; a faithful husband forgets his wife and turns to a more beautiful woman; the parents who are too proud of their child and become vain; an important man wishes more power than he already has amongst his own people; and even Iktomi seeks revenge but wishes to find his own peace in life.

From this unit, the student can learn various lessons of life that are ageless. From these same persons, the student will learn how life was started here on this earth in the earliest of time. Punished and living without companionship, these persons wander about waiting to perform their tasks. Finally, a falling star, Woope, brings a message from Mahpiyato. She teaches Tate and his sons how to be clothed and to eat well.

In serving out their punishment, these wandering persons aid each other in establishing the four directions of the world. Iktomi gets carried away with his pranks and intrudes upon the others from time to time without ever getting completely caught. But, in general, the work of establishing the four directions by the four brothers is the most important part of this story.

One of the best descriptive explanations of the four directions

and their importance is brought out in the Pipe of Peace, chapter 1 of The World's Rim. Sword's description supports the importance of the four directions and their link to the four brothers. Also, the traveling of the four brothers is undertaken in the Lakota motion of clock-wise, starting at the West. Black Elk also gives the importance of a clock-wise direction in the book.

Important Facts

1. The milky way in the heavens is the pathway to the spirit world.

2. Geographic differences are found by the four brothers as they travel around the world.

3. A spatial order is set by the four quarters of the earth.

4. The four directions were set in about nine months or moons.

5. The first time is a daytime; the second time is a nightime; and the third time is a moon; while the fourth time remains unknown, it is perhaps a year as we know it.

6. Wakinyan gives fire to the four brothers.

7. Sweet grass is important in courtship and gives off a perfume odor.

8. Various dishes and pemmican were eaten by the Lakota people and the supernaturals.

Class Activities

1. Using the stories, reconstruct a map of the world complete with the right colors, symbols, and/or any other descriptive elements. This map of the world might be done as an art form which could be hung as a wall hanging or done as a shield. Using tempra color kits and plywood cut into circular shapes and feathers or beads, the students might fashion their own interpretation of the map of the world.

2. A holy man should be invited to visit the class to demonstrate the use of the pipe with the four directions and give his interpretation of their importance, colors, movements, or any other views he has on this matter.

3. Sweet grass could be burned by the class in order to catch the perfumed odor which it gives. A small braided hoop of sweet grass comforted Woope during Okaga's absence and gave assurance of his return to her.

UNIT FOUR
THE LAKOTA PEOPLE COME TO THE EARTH

Objectives

1. To understand the beginnings of Lakota ceremonies:

   Sacred Pipe

   Sweat Lodge

   Hunka (making of relatives)

   Vision Quest

   Keeping of the Soul

   Buffalo Ceremony for Young Girls

2. To understand the importance of having Lakota ceremonies.

Materials

Ehanni Ohunkakan. Spearfish: Black Hills State College, 1971.

The Ikce or Lakota People and Their First Days on Earth.

Brown, Joseph Epes. The Sacred Pipe. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953.

Alexander, Hartley G. The World's Rim. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1953.

Eastman, Charles, and Eastman, Elaine G. Wigwam Evenings. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1930.

To the Instructor:

The use of the word Lakota is old and generally used by those who speak the Lakota language in referring to their identity. A non-speaker and a mixed-blood is inclined to refer to himself as an Indian or Sioux, perhaps defining that to Oglala Sioux. To understand the explanation of the use of Ikce, the following is quoted from Dr. James R. Walker's paper on Oglala Kinship Terms:

> Those who speak certain dialects and conform to certain customs and usages are Lakota. The Lakota are allied against all others of mankind, though they may war among themselves. They are OYATE IKCE (native people) and are ANKANTU (superior), while all others of mankind are OYATE UNMA (other people) who are IHUKUYA (considered inferior). This is the relation of the Lakota to all others of mankind, and if any refuse to acknowledge this relation, they are TOKOYAPI (considered enemies) and should be treated as such.
>
> The Lakota TAKU KICIYAPI (consider-one-another-kindred) because they are all either OWE (of-blood, of-one-blood) or OWEYA (considered-of-blood). The OWEPI are those whose ancestors were OWEPI. The OWEYAPI are those who have ancestors who were OWEPI but who have one or more ancestors who were OYATE UNMA (other people).

Therefore, using the phrase OYATE IKCE, the Lakota people referred to themselves as the native people or the common people having one blood. They no longer referred to themselves as belonging with the Pte people, for they left these relatives behind in the regions under the earth. They followed their leader, Tokahe, through the cave and onto the earth to be taught to survive by the old man Wazi, and Wakankan.

During this period of transition from the old life to the new life, there were many things to be learned. Included in these was the wearing of animal skins and the eating of animal flesh. There was communication and cooperation between the supernatural people and the new residents of the world. There was opportunity for helpfulness and

cooperation. Yet in spite of this new cooperation, there was also the threat of destruction, which the supernaturals controlled. In time, they would have to be defeated in order for the Lakota to become a total people.

The stories remembered from this period of time give the background of ceremonies which emerged. The oldest ceremony is the sweat lodge used to rid the body of sickness and evil. Death, which had not been known before, was now a part of living. To accept this fate, the Lakota were taught proper ways to react to the death of another person. Another important ceremony provided for closer cooperation and comradeship among the Lakota people. This was the Hunka ceremony whose bonds tied individuals and families to each others' trust. In this manner, the Lakota people were molded into a society which survived plagues and monster attacks, who respected the dead, made sacrifices, and who became relatives like one people.

There is vague mention that there were other strange people who had shapes like animals but who were not Lakota. One of these strange animal-people was the buffalo who consented to be the source of food, clothing, and shelter for mankind. Many of these strange people with strange customs and languages were those led astray by Iktomi and other tricksters. They had forgotten who they were and lost contact with the true Lakota people.

One other important point is that the Lakota people, according to the Ehanni stories, were not using their sacred pipe until long after Tokahe had departed from the people. Their earliest ceremonies were established. Later, the appearance of the sacred pipe is brought by a white buffalo calf woman who is of animal-human form. A winter count of a Lakota man, High Hawk, places the bringing of the sacred

pipe as the year 1540. He mentions that this occurs some 600 years after the Lakota learned to survive by wearing animal skins and taming wild coyotes for dogs. The woman also brought the gift of corn with her and admonished the people not to do any evil.

For detailed descriptions of each particular ceremony as it has been preserved in ritual form, Joseph Epes Brown's book, The Sacred Pipe, gives the reader accurate information. For a wider range of reading, but still retaining the spiritual significance, is The World's Rim by Alexander. While this book has a strong Siouan influence throughout, it does have excellent cross-cultural comparison with other tribes and other native peoples. Taking each symbol for its particular importance is a fine way to learn to appreciate ceremonies. There is the pipe, the tree, the rock, the corn, death, children, and the sun dance itself, which is a ceremony. Each of the chapters gives excellent insight into the relationship between man and the bigger universe.

Important Facts

1. Women were taught to gossip and be suspicious or jealous of men.

2. The early life of the Lakota included fish and wild rice.

3. Beauty of a woman can be bewitching like Anog-Ite, but harmful.

4. Germs are hidden in the water people drink.

5. Giving away for a dead friend or relative is proper behavior

6. A sweat bath washes impurities from the body.

7. A vision gives powers to those who have gone to a secluded spot and who are chosen to receive.

8. Rules which upheld one's successful vision were to be followed.

9. A red stripe at the parting of the hair indicated the young woman has had a Buffalo Ceremony for her benefit to be a true and good woman.

Class Activities

1. Take a trip to Green Grass, Cheyenne River Reservation to visit the home of the Keeper of the Sacred Pipe.

2. Take a trip to Bear Butte, the sacred site of the Northern and Southern Cheyenne peoples' ceremonies.

3. Visit the home of the Keeper of the Sacred Hat Bundle at Lame Deer on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

4. Take a sweat bath according to the instructions learned.

5. Have a speaker who is a holy man answer questions for the class.

UNIT FIVE
OHUNKAKAN

Objectives

1. The student will understand the powerful nature of those beings who aided the Lakota people in their first days upon the earth.

2. The student will understand the close relationship the Lakota people had with the supernatural world.

Materials

Ehanni Ohunkakan. Spearfish: Black Hills State College, 1971.

Ohunkakan, pp. 115-147.

Sanders, Thomas, and Peek, Walter. Literature of the American Indian. Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press.

Chapter 2, The Trickster, Heroes and the Folk.

Eastman, Charles, and Eastman, Elaine G. Wigwam Evenings. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1930.

Curtis, Edward S. The North American Indian. Vol. 3. Cambridge: The University Press, 1908.

To the Instructor:

The Ohunkakan stories were characterized best by the closeness of the supernatural and the ordinary Lakota person. Here, the heroes of the Lakota people come from ordinary persons. A small pebble becomes Stone Boy, a hero who overpowers the supernatural through his strength and wit in order to aid his uncles and stop his mother from greiving. A drop of blood became the Blood Boy who is welcomed by poor and starving parents who had wished for a son. His strength and generosity bring much to eat for them at their lodge.

Not to be overlooked is the presence of Iktomi, whose folly confronts both man and beast as he tries to get ahead of everyone in revenge. His stories reveal that he can be sometimes human, sometimes cunning like an animal whose shape he can imitate. Iktomi is not a hero but is always trying to be one. He has gotten more than his share of storytelling and unfortunately has the prize position of importance in the Lakota world. To remember the old Lakota stories should mean more to the ordinary person than to remember the exploits of Iktomi. Perhaps this is the way Iktomi wanted it, for even now he has good cause to laugh at the Lakota people. He has caused the Lakota people such merriment that they forgot about the other supernatural forms and with that, the Lakota people cannot remember who they are or how they came to be on this earth.

Chapter 2 of the book Literature of the American Indian brings out the Iktomi stories among a number of Indian tribes. His character is similar and he is a trickster in general. His influence is widespread among many tribes, whether he is Iktomi (spider), Raven bird, Coyote, or another form.

Perhaps there is a deeper significance to the stories concerning Iktomi which has been lost through the laughter of their retelling. Taken as individual acts of one person, the archetype is that of an individual versus society. When the individual person seeks to satisfy his own personal needs or wants, he neglects the well-being of all other people. In particular cases of wealth and plenty to eat, which are basic situations, the individual must remember others. Iktomi always forgets any good lesson and is apt to commit the same error over and over. His selfishness and greed do him in each time. It is therefore the deeper meaning of the Iktomi stories which the Lakota people should remember and learn from instead of relishing the laughter as a learning technique. For, like Iktomi, many people listen to hear only merriment and laugh long and loud, but fail to understand the moral of the story.

Important Facts

1. There are heroes among the Lakota people who battled on their side against all enemies, namely Blood Boy and Stone Boy.

2. The buffalo creature gave itself to mankind so that they might live.

3. The stories of Iktomi teach a lesson as he encounters both the supernatural and the Lakota people or animals.

4. The Lakota people struggled to survive even though powers like Unk and her sons tried again and again to destroy them.

Class Activities

1. Using the Iktomi stories, the class might relate the importance of having such stories, their experiences with Iktomi stories, and present-day happenings which could easily be transferred into Iktomi-like situations and terminology.

2. Write an Iktomi story. Choose a central theme; describe Iktomi; draw a picture of him; and give him characteristics and mannerisms to act like an animal. Have him think out loud. Give a series of happenings which end in his near death.

UNIT SIX
EHANNI WICOWOYAKE

Objectives

1. To understand the closeness between the supernatural and common man.

2. To understand the historical happenings of the Lakota people within the last few generations.

3. To understand the names given to geographic sites in the land recognized and claimed by the Lakota people.

4. To understand the "Why Things Are The Way They Are" types of stories about animals and other important items.

Materials

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Ehanni Wicowoyake, pp. 150-174.

South Dakota Writers' Project, Work Projects Administration. Legends of the Mighty Sioux. Sioux Falls: Fantab, n.d.

To the Instructor:

This section of stories gives greater depth to Lakota life, and is easy to identify with one's self. They tell of true happenings of the Lakota people. These happenings sometimes had supernatural elements occurring, but were mainly that of the unordinary.

During this period of time the Lakota people find it harder to communicate with the animals and often do so by interpreting animal mannerisms rather than speech. The stories that concern the supernatural also lack this quality of speech. Also, a good number of ghost stories occur in which there is aid from deceased persons, or in which communication is held with ghosts who live among the people. Another aspect of this period is the marriages which take place between humans and animals, usually unknowingly to the innocent human person. This kind of relationship with the supernatural is touched upon as a reminder that the supernatural is present.

However, the basic trend is that the Lakota people have less of the former closeness with the supernatural world. Now they must labor by their own means to make their needs heard and struggle to communicate with their ancestors.

Alone, they repeat to each other the mystery of life and the why of things. Why the animals are the way they are, why there are particular mannerisms of things, and what significance all of this has to the Lakota people.

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FILM RESOURCES

American Indians of the Plains. Order from: Coronet Sound Filmstrips, 65 E. South Water Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601.

Calumet Pipe of Peace. Order from: University of California, Extension Media, 2223 Fulton Street, Berkeley, California 94720.

Children of the Plains Indian. Order from: Indian Health Service Office, Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401.
(20 minutes, black & white)

Indians of the Plains Sun Dance. Order from: University of Minnesota, Department of Audio-Visual Extension, 2037 University Avenue Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455.

Legends of the Sioux. Order from: Indian Health Area Office, Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401; or Bureau of Indian Affairs, 422 1/2 Main Street, Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401.
(16 mm, 30 minutes, color, sound)

The Loon's Necklace. Order from: Film Library, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota 57069.

Spirit of the Dance. Order from: Film and Television Center, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana 59715.
(16 mm, 15 minutes, color, sound)

Story of the Peace Pipe: Ceremonial Pipes. Order from: University of Oklahoma Film Library, Norman, Oklahoma 73069.
(16 minutes, color)

Tales of the Plains Indians. Order from: Coronet Filmstrips, 65 E. South Water Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601.
(Series includes: The Gift of the Ponies, Their History, How the Medicine Came From the Sun, The Coming of the Peace Pipe, The Stars that Created the Earth, The First Buffalo)

Charles Kills Enemy, Medicine Man (Documentary). Order from: Calumet Communications, Inc., Box 311, Yankton, South Dakota 57069.